

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SS-15 EB-11 COME-00 INT-08 SCEM-02

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 CPR-02 NSC-10 CEA-02

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5/4/73 EXT 22647

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EB/ ORF/ F : GSGI

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

INFO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 085914

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP ENRG TC

SUBJECT: VISIT OF ABU DHABI MINISTER OF PETROLEUM

REF: STATE 082460

1. APPOINTMENT SCHEDULED FOR ABU DHABI OIL MINISTER
OTAIBA TO MEET WITH DEPUTY SECRETARY RUSH AT 11:00 AM
MAY 17. APPOINTMENTS ALSO SCHEDULED WITH AKINS AT 10:00
AM ON MAY 16 AND AT 9:30 MORNING MAY 17 WITH CHARLES
DIBONA, SPECIAL CONSULTANT ON ENERGY IN WHITE HOUSE
(FYI - DIBONA HEADS STAFF WHICH SERVICES THE PRESIDENT'S
SPECIAL ENERGY COMMITTEE COMPOSED OF HIS COUNSELORS ON
ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS, AND DOMESTIC
AFFAIRS END FYI).
CONFIDENTIAL

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2. BELIEVE SCHEDULE AS NOW STANDS WILL PROVIDE OTAIBA
WITH A RANGE OF MEETINGS WITH HIGH- LEVEL USG OFFICIALS
CONCERNED WITH MIDDLE EAST POLITICAL AND ENERGY MATTERS
COMPARABLE TO ANY OTHER ARAB OIL MINISTER THAT HAS

VISITED WASHINGTON. HIS MEETING WITH MR. RUSH, WHO WILL BE ACTING SECRETARY AT THAT TIME, SHOULD MEET UAE PRESIDENT SHAIKH ZAYID'S INTEREST THAT OTAIBA MEET RANKING USG OFFICIAL TO DISCUSS CERTAIN POLITICAL MATTERS OF CONCERN TO UAE. IF OTAIBA HAS LETTER FROM ZAYID TO THE PRESIDENT, OTAIBA SHOULD BE INFORMED THAT IT SHOULD BE DELIVERED DURING HIS MEETING WENT MAY 2 THAT " EVIDENCE IS THAT THE SITUATION IS WORSE, NOT BETTER THAN IT WAS IN MARCH" MAKES VERY CLEAR THAT IF DECISION WERE TO BE MADE TODAY, WITHDRAWAL WOULD BE ALL BUT INEVITABLE.

3. ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NO FIRM INFORMATION WHEN GOC DECISION WILL BE MADE, CHANCES ARE IT WILL BE BEFORE THE END OF MAY, AND PERHAPS WELL BEFORE. PRESS QUOTES " INFORMAL SOURCES/ TO EFFECT THAT CABINET WILL DISCUSS ICCS MAY 10. EXTAFF VIET- NAM DESK OFFICERS DESCRIBE THIS AS HIGHLY UNLIKELY, BUT SUGGEST MAY 17 OR MAY 24, MORE PROBABLY THE FORMER.

4. SENIOR EXTAFF OFFICIALS (OTTAWA 740) HAVE TOLD US THAT FOREIGN PRESSURES, AND PARTICULARLY THAT OF USG, WERE IMPORTANT FACTORS IN DECISION TAKEN LATE MARCH TO RENEW PROVISIONAL GOC COMMITMENT TO ICCS. PRESIDENT'S LETTER TO PRIMIN TRUDEAU, SECRETARY'S CALL TO SHARP, AND UNDER SECRETARY PORTER'S OVERNIGHT VISIT DID MUCH TO ELICIT FAVORABLE GOC RESPONSE. EMBASSY IS DOUBTFUL, IN PRESENT ATMOSPHERE, WHETHER SIMILAR PRESSURES WOULD BE AS EFFECTIVE NOW. GOC AND CANADIANS ARE PROUD, AND WE GATHER JUSTIFIABLY, OF CANDEL'S RECORD IN THE ICCS TO DATE. HOWEVER, GOC COMMITMENT TO WITHDRAW IN ABSENCE SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT IN VIET- NAM SITUATION HAS BEEN REITERATED SO OFTEN AND SO FIRMLY THAT FURTHER EXTENSION IN ABSENCE DEMONSTRABLE IMPROVEMENT WOULD BE AT LEAST HIGHLY EMBARRASSING, AND COULD POSSIBLY PROVOKE GOVERNMENT'S DEFEAT. LEFT- WING NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY, ON WHOSE SUPPORT GOVERNMENT'S TENURE DEPENDS, WAS AGAINST PROVISIONAL EXTENSION FROM BEGINNING. CONSERVATIVE OPPOSITION, THOUGH NOT HOSTILE HERETOFORE TO ICCS PARTICIPATION, WOULD BE QUICK TO POINT OUT MAJOR INCONSISTENCY BETWEEN PREVIOUS GOC STATEMENTS AND A DECISION TO REMAIN LONGER IN ICCS.

5. IT IS OF COURSE CONCEIVABLE (THOUGH BY NO MEANS CERTAIN) THAT IF USG REQUEST FOR GOC ICCS PARTICIPATION WERE PUT STRONGLY IN CONTEXT MAINLY OF OVERALL BILATERAL US- CANADIAN RELATIONSHIP, GOC MIGHT FEEL OBLIGED TO ACCEDE. EMBASSY BELIEVES THIS COURSE WOULD HAVE SERIOUS RISKS.

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A) GOC MIGHT REJECT IT, LEADING LOGICALLY TO STIFF USG REACTION IN ONE OR MORE AREAS OF OUR COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP WITH EFFECT OF SEVERE STRAIN ON VARIOUS TIES BETWEEN US AND DAMAGE TO IMPORTANT INTERESTS OF BOTH

COUNTRIES;

B) GOC AGREEMENT TO CONTINUE IN ICCS IN RESPONSE PRINCIPALLY TO USG PRESSURE COULD POSSIBLY MEAN EXPECTATION OF HIGH PRICE IN BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS OF AUTO PACT DIFFERENCES, ETC., THOUGH GOC GENERALLY NO MORE PERSUADED OF " TRANSFERENCE OF BENEFIT OR PENALTY" POSSIBILITIES THAN WE;

C) GOC AGREEMENT MIGHT LEAD TO ITS EARLY DEMISE, WITH NEXT GOVERNMENT REVERSING THE DECISION.

6. SHORT OF INVOKING OUR TOTAL RELATIONSHIP, EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT IF USG INTENDS TO URGE GOC TO CONTINUE ITS PARTICIPATION, ITS VIEWS SHOULD BE PUT, AND PUT FORCEFULLY, TO GOC AT AS EARLY A DATE AS POSSIBLE, SINCE CABINET DECISION NOT FAR OFF. EMBASSY SUGGESTS THAT A HIGH- LEVEL MEETING OF EXPERTS WOULD BE APPROPRIATE VEHICLE, AS PROPOSED BY COLLINS (OTTAWA 740). SUCH A DEMARCHE IS NOT LIKELY TO BE EFFECTIVE, HOWEVER, WITHOUT SOME FORM OF DEMONSTRABLE AND TANGIBLE EVIDENCE, NOT JUST THAT CANADIAN ICCS ROLE IS IMPORTANT TO KEEP SITUATION FROM DETERIORATING FURTHER, BUT THAT SITUATION IS ACTUALLY OR POTENTIALLY ON THE MEND. WE NOTE HERE THAT GOC MAY HAVE TO MAKE SUCH EVIDENCE PUBLIC, TO DEFEND WHAT MIGHT OTHERWISE BE AN INDEFENSIBLE POSITION VIS- A- VIS PUBLIC OPINION AND PARLIAMENT. FAILING A REAL AND VISIBLE REDUCTION IN HOSTILITIES, EMBASSY WOULD HOPE USG COULD PASS TO GOC SUBSTANCE OF ANY PERTINENT CONVERSATIONS DR. KISSINGER HAS HAD IN MOSCOW, OR MAY HAVE WITH DRV REPRESENTATIVES LATER THIS MONTH. EVEN REASSURANCES OF THIS SORT MIGHT BE VIEWED IN SAME LIGHT AS EARLIER TALKS WITH POLES AND HUNGARIANS, WHICH WERE APPRECIATED AT TIME BUT WHICH HAVE PRODUCED LITTLE EVIDENCE SO FAR OF REDUCING OBSTRUCTIONISM IN ICCS, SHOULD OTHER SIGNIFICANT HIGH- LEVEL MEETINGS BE PLANNED WHICH COULD HAVE

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FAVORABLE IMPACT, GOC SHOULD BE INFORMED.

7. IN THE ABSENCE OF CLEAR AND FAVORABLE INDICATIONS THAT VIET- NAM SITUATION IMPROVING OR LIKELY TO IMPROVE, EMBASSY BELIEVES SOME EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE ANYWAY LEST GOC SUBSEQUENTLY CLAIM THAT USG APPEARED TO HAVE LOST INTEREST. EMBASSY MUST RELUCTANTLY CONCLUDE, HOWEVER, THAT IF PERSUASIVE CASE NOT POSSIBLE, USG SHOULD BE PREPARED SEEK ALTERNATIVE ICCS PARTICIPANT. FOLLOWING A GOC DECISION TO LEAVE ICCS, EMBASSY BELIEVES GOC WOULD MAKE EVERY EFFORT BE RESPONSIVE TO REQUESTS FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO INDOCHINA.

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